DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 175 976 UD 019 740

AUTHOR Hurh, Won Moo; Kim, Kwang Chung
TITLE Social and Occupational Assimilation of Korean Immigrants in the United States.
PUB DATE 79
NOTE 34p.; Not available in paper copy due to author's restriction; Paper prepared for the Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies (Los Angeles, California, March 30-April 1, 1979)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Acculturation; *Economic Factors; *Equal Opportunities (Jobs); *Ethnic Relations; Intergroup Relations; *Korean Americans; Occupational Mobility; Social Discrimination; *Social Integration; Social Mobility

ABSTRACT

In the past the economic dimension of ethnic assimilation has usually been studied in terms of occupational discrimination. This paper argues that the economic dimension of ethnic relations can best be studied through a broader theoretical framework: occupational assimilation. Occupational assimilation includes the entire process involved in the minority member's occupational career, such as opportunity for job information acquisition, job entry (hiring standard, screening process), internal allocative practices (initial position, mobility cluster, on-the-job training opportunity, job evaluation), monetary and non-monetary compensation, and chance of inter-organizational mobility. A case study of Korean immigrant workers in the Chicago area appears to support the above theoretical contention. In short, social and occupational assimilation are mutually interdependent. Implications of the findings are discussed, and directions of future studies in this area are suggested. (Author)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

AUG 1 6 1979

ED175976

SOCIAL AND OCCUPATIONAL ASSIMILATION OF KOREAN IMMIGRANTS IN THE UNITED STATES

Won Moo Hurh
Kwang Chung Kim

Western Illinois University

Prepared for the Annual Meeting of
the Association for Asian Studies
Los Angeles, California
March 30-April 1, 1979

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

W. M. Hurh

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

UDO 19740

Abstract

In the past the economic dimension of ethnic assimilation has usually been studied in terms of occupational discrimination. This paper argues that the economic dimension of ethnic relations can best be studied through a broader theoretical framework: occupational assimilation. Occupational assimilation includes the entire process involved in the minority member's occupational career, such as opportunity for job information acquisition, job entry (hiring standard, screening process), internal allocative practices (initial position, mobility cluster, on-the-job training opportunity, job evaluation), Monetary and non-monetary compensation, and chance of inter-organizational mobility. A case study of Korean immigrant workers in the Chicago area appears to support the above theoretical contention. In short, social and occupational assimilation are mutually interdependent. Implications of the findings are discussed. and directions of future studies in this area are suggested.

SOCIAL AND OCCUPATIONAL ASSIMILATION OF KOREAN IMMIGRANTS IN THE UNITED STATES

INTRODUCTION

Past sociological studies on ethnic assimilation have mainly dealt with cultural, social and psychological aspects of assimilation and did not pay sufficient attention to the economic dimension of assimilation. For instance, even the most celebrated classic work, Milton Gordon's Assimilation in American Life (1964) did not specify occupational assimilation in its typology. Of Gordon's seven types of assimilation, "structural assimilation"[1] (large-scale entrance into cliques, clubs and institutions of the host society on primary group level), "attitudinal receptional assimilation" (absence of prejudice), and "behavioral receptional assimilation" (absence of discrimination) are particularly related to the minority member's economic life-chance. "Occupational assimilation" as such was, however, neither conceptualized nor its dimensions were specified by Gordon.

Recently Hodge and Hodge (1965) introduced the term "occupational assimilation" in their study of income discrimination and occupational

---

[1] The term "structural assimilation" will be referred to as "social assimilation" throughout this paper for sake of consistency with our previous study (Hurh, Kim and Kim 1978).

segregation in the labor market, which resulted from competition between majority and minority groups. The above study was subsequently reanalyzed and criticized by Taeuber, Taeuber and Cain (1966), but neither Hodge and Hodge nor their critics defined what occupational assimilation was.

We define occupational assimilation, for the purpose of this paper, as the entire process in which the minority member's occupational career becomes ~~to~~ similar to that of the majority member in terms of opportunity for job information acquisition, job entry (hiring standard, screening process), internal allocative practices (initial position, mobility cluster, on-the-job training oppportunity, job evaluation), monetary and non-monetary compensation, and chance of inter-organizational mobility. The main purpose of this paper is to examine various aspects of the relationship between occupational assimilation and social assimilation, the "keystone of the arch of assimilation" (Gordon, 1964:81).

According to Gordon, "once structural assimilation has occured, ... all the other types of assimilation will naturally follow" (1964:81). Suppose structural (social) assimilation has not occured, what would happen to other types of assimilation, for instance, occupational assimilation which is our main concern in this paper. This issue is important, since Gordon himself recognizes that many minority groups have not achieved social assimilation. He observes that in reality, "each racial and religious (and to a lesser extent, national origins) group has its own network of cliques, clubs, organizations and institutions which tend to confine primary group contact of its members within the

ethnic enclave ..." (1964:110). Gordon calls this ethnic confinement "structural pluralism."[1] Under this condition of structural (social) pluralism, what would be the occupational experiences of minority members? Gordon does not explicate in detail. He states further, however, "... interethnic contacts take place in considerable part only at the secondary group level of employment and the political and civic processes" (1964:110-111). He seems to believe that in the primary group contact, minority groups are isolated from each other, but in the secondary group level, the groups show considerable intergroup contact. The above notion suggests then ethnic enclosure in the labor market is an exceptional case, and therefore, the labor market is generally an open and impersonal mechanism, and also color-blind. Is the American labor market so impersonal and color-blind? For example, would Korean immigrant workers enjoy similar occupational career patterns to those of white workers as long as they learned the American way of life and skills necessary for their jobs? Or, in addition to acculturation and training, must Korean workers socially be assimilated into the dominant group in order to attain occupational assimilation?

This paper attempts to answer the above questions in two ways: review of the relevant literature for a theoretical model and a case study of Korean immigrant workers in the Chicago area for illustration. Through the review of past studies on the discriminatory structure of the American labor market we will discuss how social marginality finds its way to economic marginality and through what mechanism the social barrier (such

---

[1] Structural pluralism will be referred to as a low degree of social assimilation in this paper.

as racism or sexism) is transformed into the occupational barrier (discrimination).[1] An exploratory study on Korean blue-collar workers in the Chicago area will illustrate our theoretical contention. The majority of adult Korean immigrants completed college and held white-collar jobs prior to their emigration from Korea. This high socioeconomic status has expedited their cultural assimilation but not social assimilation in the United States (Hurh, Kim and Kim, 1978). As long as Koreans are socially marginal in America, they will most likely remain occupationally marginal also regardless of their progressive acculturation.

Studies on the occupational aspects of race and ethnic relations have traditionally been in the hands of economists who usually limit their research focus on wage discrimination and job segregation which they believe mainly caused by rational economic competition. We feel, however, one should go beyond the competition model in order to understand occupational experiences of minorities. As Bibb and Form point out, the labor market should be examined not merely as a product of economic competition but as "a socially structured mechanism which links economic and social organiza-

---

[1] One may argue that our model does not apply to sex discrimination. True, white females are not socially segregated from white males and racism certainly does not enter in their social relations; however, sexism does. As long as sexism is there, social inequality stays, and social inequality is transformed into economic inequality through the mechanism of the labor market segmentation. In this sense, the concept of "social barrier" is equally applicable to sexual and ethnic minorities. It is a matter of magnitude and intensity when we talk about the difference -- white females suffer from the least social barrier (social inequality); non-white females, the most (social inequality and segregation) and the non-white male, in-between (cf. Blau and Duncan, 1967).

ations through a wider range of social processes" (1977:976). This paper is an attempt to emphasize such a sociological approach which seeks to analyze economic issues from a broader sociocultural context.

DISCRIMINATORY STRUCTURE OF THE AMERICAN LABOR MARKET

Two contrasting views dominate in the analysis of racial discrimination: the neoclassical economic theory and the labor market segmentation. The neoclassical economic theory is based on the idea of marginal productivity. For instance, the queue theory embodies the idea of marginal productivity. According to the queue theory, an employer ranks prospective employees in terms of their desirability based on human capital variables, such as formal education, vocational training, job experiences, skills, etc. Under this condition, a job seeker's chance of employment depends on his rank and labor demand, given wage level. If his/her rank is low in the employer's list and labor demand does not increase, his/her chance of employment is slim. Since minority workers are usually ranked low[22] than white workers, the former have less chance of employment than the latter. This situation forces minority workers to be crowded into "a relatively few catagories of jobs requiring minimum skills and abilities" (Beck, Horan and Tolbert, 1978:3).

The neoclassical theory, as demonstrated by the above queue theory, explains racial discrimination in terms of the competitive process on

the basis of individual skills which are desired by prospective employers. Such a competitive and individualistic approach is akin to the structural-functionalism in social stratification (Grandjean, 1975). Inadequecies of this approach have been pointed out by several scholars (Bibb and Form, 1977; Gordon, 1977; Grandjean, 1975; Marshall, 1974).

The study of labor market segmentation is a relatively new school of thought which accommodates sociological perspectives. This theory maintains that the system of labor allocation and pricing has been divided into multiple segments across and within occupations, industries and enterprises in the United States. This segmentation has been called "Balkanization of labor market," "dual labor market," "split labor market," or "segments and shelters of labor market" (Bonacich, 1972; Doeringer and Piore, 1971; Freedman, 1976; Kerr, 1954). It is argued that a segment of the labor market can be distinguished from another through such reward-related factors as job stability, pay, training opportunity, promotion chance and so on, as illustrated by Doeringer and Piore's dichotomy of the labor market (primary and secondary). The specific mechanism which differentiates various segments of the labor market is known as "institutional rules," "internal labor market," or "sheltering mechanism" (Doeringer and Piore, 1971; Freedman, 1976; Kerr, 1954).

Institutional rules, sheltering mechanism or internal labor market is not solely designed to promote racial discrimination. As Doeringer and Piore suggest, the above mechanisms can be considered as a part of the total fabric of labor allocation and pricing (1971:137). However, once such mechanisms develop, they reward those who are already employed in terms of

job security, pay, skill learning opportunity, promotion, etc., but penalize job seekers. Under this condition, it is very difficult for job seekers to penetrate into the labor market where these mechanisms have already been established. This difficult condition forces minority workers to gravitate into the easily accessible but relatively unfavorable labor market or remain unemployed.

Several scholars relate the labor market segmentation to the industrial structure of the United States (Doeringer and Piore, 1971; Freedman, 1976; Beck, Horan and Tolbert, 1978ab). For instance, Beck, Horan and Tolbert link labor market segmentation to the dichotomy of the American industrial structure: core and periphery. The core industry is characterized by "large, oligopolistic firms concentrated in the extractive, construction, durable manufacturing, petrochemical, transportation and commerce, and portion of wholesale trade and professional industries" (1977a:6). In contrast, the periphery industry is characterized by competitive small firms "concentrated in agricultural production, nondurable manufacturing, portion of wholesale, retail trade and most services" (1978a:6).

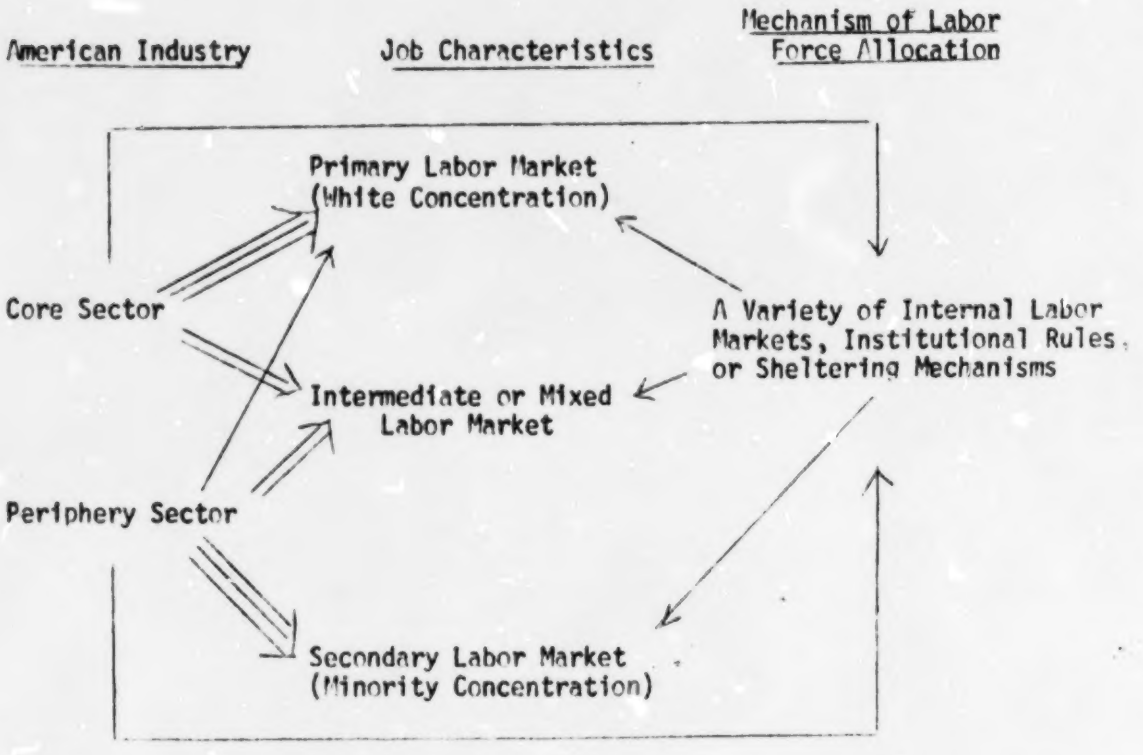
The two sectors of industry require different types of labor forces. Beck, Horan and Tolbert note that "while the core sector requires a labor force which is trainable and stable, the priphery sector requires a labor froce that will accept inferior working conditions, low pay and high rate of work instability" (1978a:6). From this position, they argue that labor market dichotomy -- primary and secondary -- is a natural outcome of the duality of the American industrial structure (1978b:706).

A number of empirical studies indicate the following: existence of labor market segmentation in the United States and concentration of minority workers in relatively unfavorable (periphery) sectors of labor market. Ng's analysis (1977) of occupational distribution of three racial groups, for example, reveals that male workers of two minority groups (black and Chinese) are substantially different from whites in their occupational distribution. He shows further that the dual-labor market hypothesis adequately explains the occupational grouping of the white and black male workers. Due to the predominance of a middle-man category, however, this hypothesis cannot explain occupational distribution of the male Chinese workers.

The above review of the past studies clearly demonstrate, in spite of the American manifest ideal of universalism, particularistic (ascriptive) criteria override universalistic (achievement) criteria in the labor force allocation. This allocative system contains minority workers in the secondary labor markets, while it allows white male workers to dominate the primary labor markets. This containment system is illustrated in Figure 1.

[Figure 1, about here]

Figure 1. Labor Market Containment of Minority Workers


American Industry
Job Characteristics
Mechanism of Labor Force Allocation
Primary Labor Market (White Concentration)
Core Sector
A Variety of Internal Labor Markets, Institutional Rules, or Sheltering Mechanisms
Intermediate or Mixed Labor Market
Periphery Sector
Secondary Labor Market (Minority Concentration)

As shown above, minority workers are concentrated in the secondary labor markets which are products of the peripheral sectors of the American industry. As compared with the secondary labor market, minority workers decrease proportionally in the intermediate markets (located between the primary and secondary) or mixed markets (a mixture of the primary and secondary). Minority workers decrease further proportionally in the primary markets. The reverse is, however, true for the white male workers.

DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICES IN THE MINORITY LABOR FORCE ALLOCATION

As reviewed in the previous section, a concentration of minority workers in the secondary labor market results from discriminatory practices which are found to operate in various segment of labor market. Of eleven instruments through any of which racial discrimination could occur in the internal labor market, the following three major categories are the most effectual according to Doeringer and Piore (1971:94): entry discrimination (e.g., hiring standards, screening criteria, recruitment), internal allocative rules (vertical and horizontal mobility clusters) and wage discrimination. For the purpose of this paper, we modify and expand the categories as follows:

(1) Opportunity of job information acquisition.

(2) Job entry (hiring standards and screening procedure).

(3) Internal allocative procedure (initial position, mobility cluster, on-the-job training opportunity, and job evaluation).

(4) Monetary and non-monetary compensation.

If minority workers are discriminated against in any of the above categories, it may be said that they are not occupationally assimilated. To what extent and in what way could occupational assimilation be delayed or blocked?

Opportunity for Job Information Acquisition.

Job information acquisition is a necessary condition to enter the labor market, although the information may not always lead to employment. Past

studies reveal that job seekers usually use the following three methods for their job information acquisition: a formal and two informal methods (personal contact, and direct search). (Brown, 1965; Crain, 1970: Granobetter, 1974; Reid, 1972; Sheppard and Belintsky, 1966; Ullman, 1968)

Of the three methods personal contact has been found to be the most frequently used method by both blue-collar and white-collar workers. An important feature of the personal contact is that job information transmits through a narrow and informally developed interpersonal network. Thus, from the job seeker's perspective, the extent to which he/she can obtain job information depends on the type of interpersonal network he/she maintains and the socioeconomic status of those who are associated with the network. Those who have friends and relatives whose socioeconomic status is low may not receive information on the better jobs.

Since white male workers generally dominate primary markets, they are more capable of conveying information on desirable jobs than minority workers to the job seeker (Crain, 1970). This means if minority job seekers are highly socially assimilated, they would have white friends who could convey the relatively favorable job opportunities. On the other hand, if members of minority groups are socially segregated, job information deprivation is inevitable (cf. Sowell, 1975:160). In short, job information acquisition is directly linked to social assimilation.

Job Entry

The barrier encountered by minority workers from the very beginning of their occupational career may reemerge in different forms even after the

the job seekers obtained job information. Doeringer and Piore point out the possibility that some employers may set up discriminatory hiring standards in order to exclude minority applicants. For example, high educational requirements would automatically disqualify many black job seekers. In the case of Korean immigrants, the hiring standard may work against them in a rather different way: some American employers would refuse to recognize the educational status and professional credentials the Korean job seeker had attained prior to his/her emigration from Korea. Under such circumstances, underemployment of Korean workers is understandable According to our previous study in 1975-76, the vast majority of our respondents (77.8%) have received four or more years of college education in Korea and 65 percent of them held white-collar occupations at the time of their emigration from Korea but only 36.5 percent of them currently hold the same level of occupation, a change of 28.5 percent (Hurh, Kim and Kim, 1978:20-21). A similar pattern was revealed by the 1973 Asian American Field Study in Los Angeles: "60% of Korean adults have a college degree of better, but the largest occupational category is that of th factory workers with 34% (Jade, 1975:22; cf. Kim and Wong, 1977).

In the screening process, it has been found that the interview is the most frequently used method of screening job applicants in the United States (Dunnette and Bass, 1963:117). Since it is a highly subjective method, the interviewer's personal prejudice and bias may become problematic. Race is, after all, a highly visible factor, and hence, it is an inexpensive and often convenient screening criterion. Especially for the middle-level positions, such as foremen's positions that supervise white male workers, race (and sex) becomes a crucial screening factor. As

Arrow correctly observes, "the resentment against working under a supervisor belonging to a despised group may be more intense than the simple dislike of having them close by" (1972:88). This would mean highly educated minority workers are more likely to be heavily discriminated against for higher level jobs than for lower level ones.

Social assimilation into the dominant group can, however, mitigate discriminatory practices in the job entry; for example, if the job applicant is referred to the prospective employer by a member of the dominant group, the applicant's chance of getting into the primary labor market would be better than the one who is referred by a member of the minority group.

Internal Allocative Practices

A low degree of social assimilation affects internal allocative practices in the labor market in several stages: initial position, on-the-job training, mobility cluster, and job evaluation. A socially segregated minority group tends to be segregated in the labor market as shown in the past by the separation between the "Yankee" and "Irish" positions in the same labor market (Miller and Form, 1964:241). While such occupational segregation among the white ethnic groups has largely disappeared, the tendency remains still strong between white and non-white workers.

Doeringer and Piore state that internal allocative rules specify the entry position of the newly hired workers and their initial job activity.

If the rules are discriminatory, they serve to force minority workers to take mostly undesirable initial positions. In conjunction with such undesirable initial positions, Doeringer and Piore identify a highly discriminatory mobility cluster to which the majority of minority workers may be restricted (1971:141-145). First, in the same firm there may be two functionally identical but racially separate mobility clusters. Second, minority workers tend to be restricted to relatively low-paying mobility cluster where chances for on-the-job training is slim. And third, minority workers are heavily concentrated in functionally unrelated mobility cluster. Such a cluster functions to contain minority workers in isolated labor pools, such as warehouse duties, yard work or other unskilled jobs which are not related to any other significant jobs in terms of opportunities for promotion.

On-the-job training is widely recognized as a major opportunity for skill-learning and upgrading. Although on-the-job training is such a crucial event, the setting of the on-the-job training is usually informal and personal. Thus, the personal relationship between trainer and trainee becomes a crucial factor for learning. When minority workers are socially segregated, they would have more difficulty in developing interpersonal rapport with white trainers, and consequently be more handicapped in skill-learning and upgrading than their white counterparts (cf. Doeringer and Piore, 1971:84). Such a handicap has cumulative effects on the minority worker's occupational career as a whole.

Evaluation of job performance is another event crucial for promotion, job security and other career related issues. Evaluation is, however, a difficult and often subjective process (cf. Sofer, 1970:26). Social assimilation inside and/or outside of the labor market of minority workers emerges as a directly relevant factor of evaluation in the three ways discussed below. First, each worker may be judged in part by sociability, especially from the perspective of the assessor. Second, job performance is not totally a function of the worker's skill and attitude. Along with many technical conditions, atmosphere of a work team or interpersonal relations in the team greatly affect the speed, amount and quality of performance. Third, minority workers who do not share the life-style of white Americans may be judged disadvantageously as Sofer points out:

> It is to some extent inevitable that an organization or its subdivision will be suffused by preferences and values in the sphere of personal attributes and behavior that reflect the dominating values of its community of which it is part of the values of its ruling group (1970:20).

Monetary and Non-monetary Compensation

The differential entry position, mobility cluster system, on-the-job training opportunity and job evaluation certainly affect the wage system. If minority workers are placed in positions which would provide them little chance for skill-upgrading, their wage would remain low. Thus, one discriminatory practice leads to another. In addition, if the wage system is tied to job evaluation or seniority rule, this system becomes

another instrument of occupational segregation for minority workers. If the wage level is determined by a comparison with other minority workers in the internal labor market (e.g., black workers), the comparable wage would mean a low wage since the wage criterion itself is discriminatory to begin with.

Moreover, as Hodge and Hodge (1965) indicate, unemployed or recent immigrant workers may have no other alternative than to work for such a low wage due to their lack of or limited bargaining resources (e.g., non-membership in the union, lack of savings, unfamiliarity with collective bargaining, ignorance of the prevailing wage scale, weak ethnic organization, language proble, etc.). This situation is a typical case of what Bonacich calls "the split labor market" in terms of not only monetary but also non-monetary price of labor:

> To be split, a labor market must contain at least two groups of workers whose price of labor differs for the same work, or would differ if they did the same work. The concept "price of labor" refers to labor's total cost to the employer, including not only wages, but the cost of recruitment, transportation, room and board, education, health care (if the employer must bear this), and the costs of labor unrest (1972:549).

This section has reviewed the discriminatory practice of labor force allocation through labor market segmentation. The problems involved in occupational assimilation are also compounded by the tendency of minority workers to change their workplaces frequently, as demonstrated by black workers in the secondary labor market (cf. Doeringer, 1969). As long as the labor market is segmented, such horizontal mobility, however, could provide minority workers very little chance for upward mobility.

A CASE STUDY OF KOREAN IMMIGRANT WORKERS IN THE CHICAGO AREA

Our theoretical model on occupational assimilation and the discriminatory practices in the labor market discussed in the previous section will be illustrated by a case study of Korean immigrant workers in the Chicago area. Since the study was exploratory in nature, we formulated a major research question instead of specific hypotheses for testing: To what extent Korean immigrants are socially and occupationally assimilated?

From September to December, 1978, 116 Korean blue-collar workers in various plants in the Chicago areas were interviewed (73 females in three plants and 43 males in four plants). The plants were selected by the recommendation of knowledgable informants on the basis of the reputation of the plants to hire a large number of Koreans. The respondents were selected by their availability to our interview. The results of our exploratory study are discussed below.

On the average, our female respondents have lived in the Chicago area for four years, and the male, 3.5 years. The age of the majority of our respondents fall between 30's and 40's. Most of them are married (64 females and 32 males) and their spouses (61 husbands and 24 wives) are also employeed. The average family size is 3.9. As expected, a high proportion (40 percent of the female and 58 percent of the male respondents) completed their college education prior to immigration to

the United States.

Our respondents are found not to be socially assimilated. None of our respondents report membership in American voluntary association, while two thirds of the respondents report to be affiliated with Korean ethnic organizations, such as Korean churches and alumni associations (male, 64 percent; female, 67 percent). Only three indicate having any close American friends, while the overwhelming majority of our respondents (male, 80 percent; female, 95 percent) indicate having close Korean friends. A small portion of our respondents indicate having been invited by American friends or have invited American friends to their homes (18 females and 11 males).

Given such circumstances described above, the vast majority of our respondents (male, 87 percent; female, 95 percent) are found to have obtained information of their current jobs from other Koreans -- mostly personal friends. None of our respondents mention Americans as their source of job information.

Let us examine further the nature of jobs currently held by our respondents and related problems in detail. Our female respondents hold low-skilled jobs in their respective plants (food, lamp and electric plants). This is demonstrated by the nature of the work they perform and the length of time spent for skill-learning. Most of respondents (68) report to have spent a week at thetmost to learn their skills. The method of their skill-learning was on-the-job training. The workers in the food plant handle chicken (cutting, frying, and packing); the

workers in the lamp plant are engaged in various simple activities such as pumping, soldering, assembling, and packing; the workers in the electric plant are also engaged in simple low-skilled jobs, such as soldering, welding, machine operation, packing, and inspection of finished products.

In the food plant, the length of our respodents' employment ranges from two to five years. Their hourly wage is, however, uniformly $3.70. In the lamp plant, the length of the workers' employment ranges from three months to five years, and their hourly wage is $4.00 - $4.75. The length of the respondents' employment in the electric plant ranges from two months to three years, and their hourly wage is $4.00 - $4.68.

The three plants share some similarities. Most of the workers in the three plants express that their chance for promotion is very slim. All of the respondents mention that their immedidate work group is heavily composed of the members of various ethnic minorities (Asians, Mexicans, and blacks).

Our male respondents come from the following four plants: steel mill (21), manufacturer of auto parts (9), electric plant (7) and lamp plant (6). The steel workers perform heavy physical work (operation of heavy machines or pressing jobs), but their jobs require little skills. Learning of the skill took them no more than two weeks. The length of their employment ranges from one year to four years, and their hourly wage is $4.50 - $6.00. In the past, any attempt to organize labor unions was unsuccessful.

In the electric plant, it took about a week for our respondents to learn the necessary skills (soldering, machine operation, assembling, and packing), and the length of their employment ranges from three months to two years. Their hourly wage ranges from $3.75 to $5.00. In the lamp plant, our respondents are found to be either machine operators or assembly men. They state that they did not have any period of learning. The length of their employment ranges from four months to one year, and their hourly wage, from $5.09 to $5.75. The above two plants have unions but they are reportedly not active.

The employment conditions in the auto-parts plant is found to be rather excentional. Our respondents in this plant are either lathe-men or set-up men. The learning of lathing skills takes at least three years and of set-up skills, a year and half. This suggests that our respondents are either skilled workers already or under the training for skilled work. The length of their employment ranges from eleven months to nine years, and their hourly wage, from $3.70 to $8.00. The majority of them also think that their promotion prospect is generally good. We can contrast this prospect with that of the workers in the other three plants, where there was no such prospect. However, racial composition of the immediate work group is similar throughout the four plants. Most of the group members are minority workers (Asians, Mexicans, blacks, and immigrants from Eastern European countries, such as Poland and Yugoslavia).

In general, our respondents share similar employment conditions with the exception of those in the auto-parts plants. The similarities are: the low-skilled job, little mobility chance, no union protection, and low wages. These condtions characterize the secondary labor market. Moreover, the racial composition of their immediate work group suggests that their occupational contact is confined to the members of other minority groups, and the minority workers are thus collectively segregated from white workers.

The employment of our respondents in the secondary labor market and their occupational segregation from the dominant group may be traced to their lack of social assimilation, as we contended in the theoretical section of this paper. As a socially segregated minority group, Korean immigrants cannot obtain job information from members of the dominant group. This condition forces the immigrants to rely heavily on their fellow Koreans in their job search behavior. As immigrants, the job information transmitters themselves, however, are employed in the easily accessible but relatively unfavorable labor markets. This is why the jobs introduced by Korean informants are no better than those introduced by mass media or other formal methods (Kim, Kim and Hurh, 1978).

Both job information transmitters and job seekers are, therefore, deprived of an important source of job information due to a low or lack of social assimilation, and hence remain occupationally precarious. The precariousness and deprivation perpetuate through a vicious circle: one cannot penetrate into a favorable labor market due to information deprivation and one is deprived of job information due to one's lack of opportunity to participate in a favorable labor market. Simply put,

Korean workers cannot get good jobs because they don't have white friends, and since they don't have good jobs they don't have white friends either.

It is clear that the above vicious cycle is not unique to Korean immigrants. It happens to other minorities who are socially segregated. Tabb observes this in his study of black workers.

> The normal workings of the labor market discriminate against nonwhites in a number of ways. First, friends and relatives are the most common source of information about potential jobs, especially low-skilled requirement jobs. This places the black ghetto dwellers at a disadvantage. More of the people he knows will be unemployed, or employed in unstable, low-paying jobs. There is less information to share, and what exists is inferior jobs (Tabb, 1970:117).

Crain's study of the effects of school integration on black students also links social assimilation to occupational advancement. He concludes that "part of the effect of school integration on occupational acievement can be attributed to the effect of high contact with whites on job-seeking behavior" (Crain, 1970:604-605).

CONCLUSION

Expanding Gordon's typology of assimilation, we have introduced an economic dimension of assimilation -- occupational assimilation --, and examined its relationship to social assimilation. We contend that social and occupational assimilation are mutually interdependent. In other words, the higher the degree of social segregation of minority members from the dominant group, the higher becomes the degree of occupational segregation, and vice versa.

The mutual dependence can be expedited by the existence of two parallel divisions in interethnic group relations: (1) structural pluralism and (2) labor market segmentation. Structural (or social) pluralism indicates that minority members confine their primary group contact to the members of their own ethnic groups.[1] At the same time, minority workers are heavily concentrated in the secondary labor market. The ethnic confinement and occupational segmentation thus characterize the presence of dual divisions: segregation of minority groups from the dominant group in both primary and secondary contact.

Several instruments in the labor market facilitate the operation of dual division: opportunity of job information acquisition, hiring stand-

---

[1] This ethnic confinement or enclave can happen either voluntarily or involuntarily. Generally, however, involuntary segregation leads to voluntary segregation, not the other way around (cf. Hurh, 1977:51).

dards, screening procedures, initial position, mobility cluster, on-the-job training opportunity, evaluation of job performance, and wage and/or non-wage compensation. Through these instruments, socially segregated monority groups are placed in the secondary labor market. Thus lack of social assimilation emerges as a crucial variable which blocks or delays occupational assimilation of minority workers. A case study of Korean immigrant workers appears to support our contention.

The existence of the dual division signifies the discrimination problem for minority groups. This problem may be succinctly elucidated, if we sequentially arrange three of Sowell's types of racial discrimination: (1) victim of disliking; (2) misjudgement of current capacities; and (3) lacking in current capacities.

Minorities are disliked by the members of the dominant group in varying degrees. As the victim of such disliking, minority members are deprived of the opportunity to obtain job information from members of the dominant group and of any other direct aid in job entry, on-the-job training, evaluation of job performance, etc. A consequence of such deprivation is underestimation of their current capacities which Sowell calls "misjudgment of current capacities." As victims of misjudgment, they enter and remain in the secondary labor market. They have to adjust to what is available to them for sruvival. Their adjustment, however, entails modification of their past aspirations and behavioral patterns. And of course, their "successful" adjustment would mean that their attitudinal and behavioral patterns become suitable to the pre-

carious conditions of the secondary labor market: low skill, low wage, employment instability, subjection to arbitrary management, etc. Unfortunately, their "success" makes them incapable of adjusting to the primary or favorable labor market, and may further results in their becoming labelled as "lacking in current capacities."

Through this mechanism, black Americans have been severly discriminated. As a result, their performance capacity is even lower than that of recent immigrants from other countries, although the blacks are native-born Americans (Doeringer, 1969:253). As long as the same mechanism of "victimization" exists, the recent immigrants will be subjected to the same process. This projects a grim future prospect for Korean immigrants. As previously mentioned, the recent Korean immigrants are the most highly educated among the Asian immigrants; however, their occupational future does not seem very promising. Unlike black Americans who have been victimized from the beginning of their life, Korean first-generation immigrants face this problem in the middle of their career.

The major contention of our paper is that social and economic dimensions are interrelated to one another. We argue that ethnic-related economic issues cannot be solely explained by economic factors. Such a reductionistic approach (economic determinism) misses crucial non-economic factors in its analysis of the economic issues. Marshall clearly points out this danger when he criticizes the narrow perspective of the neoclassical economic theory of racial discrimination which ignores a broad institutional discrimination (1974:861). By the same logic, we argue also that various issues of social assimilation cannot

be effectively analyzed if they are separated from the issues of occupational assimilation.

We do not maintain, however, the above position rigidly. We recognize some temporary disjucture between social and occupational assimilation may be possible. As Sowell argues, the lessening of intergroup animosity is not automatically a precondition for economic advancement of minority groups. If a minority group fails to rise economically, the dominant group would exhibit a certain benign contempt (or even paternalism and charitable help) toward the poor minority group. If the group manages, however, to rise economically, the dominant group develops intensive hatred toward the minority group. Under these circumstances, Sowell stresses that if any group has gained social acceptance, "... it has typically come after their rise and has not been a cause of that rise" (1975:163).

Japanese Americans may exemplify this case to some extent. In their case, the first generation remained victimized. But the following generations have risen through their ethnic resources and educational achievement. What their experiences suggest is a possibility to break out of the vicious process of victimization through acculturation, intergenerational mobility, and social assimilation (even it's been limited). Again, the Japanese American case confirms the close link between social and occupational assimilation, whether their social assimilation (e.g., the rate of the sansei's interracial marriage) has come after their economic rise or not.

To conclude, economic determinism needs to be avoided in the study of the occupational dimension of ethnic assimilation. Occupational segregation/discrimination is often independent from rational economic considerations but dependent on non-economic factors -- social segregation and inequality. The study on the social origins of economic consequences becomes a crucial issue, a very crucial in intergroup relations.

REFERENCES

Arrow, Kenneth J.
1972 "Models of job discrimination." Pp. 83-102 in A. H. Pascal (ed.), Racial Discrimination in Economic Life. Lexington, Mass.: Heath.

Beck, E. M., Patrick M. Horan and Charles M. Tolbert II
1978a "Labor market segmentation and discrimination against minorities." A paper presented at the Annual Meetings of American Sociological Association. San Francisco, September 4-8.

1978b "Stratification in dual economy." American Sociological Review 43:704-720.

Bibb, Robert and William From
1977 "The effects of industrial, occupational and sex stratification on wages in blue-collar market." Social Forces 55:974-996.

Blau, Peter M. and Otis D. Duncan
1967 The American Occupational Structure. New York: Wiley.

Bonacich, Edna
1972 "A theory of ethnic antagonism: the split labor market." American Sociological Review 37:547-559.

Brown, David G.
1965 The Market for College Teachers. Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press.

Crain, Robert L.
1970 "School integration and occupational achievement of Negroes." American Journal of Sociology 75:593-606.

Doeringer, Peter B.
1969 "Programs to employ the disadvantaged: a labor market perspective." Pp. 245-261 in P. B. Doeringer (ed.), Programs to Employ the Disadvantaged. Englewood-Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

Doeringer, Peter B. and Michael J. Piore
1971 Internal Labor Markets and Manpower Analysis. Lexington, Mass.: Heath.

Dunnette, M. D. and B. M. Bass
1963 "Behavioral scientists and personal management." Industrial Relations 2:115-130.

Edwards, Richard C., Michael Reich and David M. Gordon
1975 Labor Market Segmentation. Lexington, Mass.: Heath.

Freedman, Marcia
1969 The Process of Work Establishment. New York: Columbia University Press.

1976 Labor Markets: Segments and Shelters. Allanheld: Osmun & Co.

Ghiselli, Edwin E.
1966 "The validity of personal interview." Personal Psychology 19: 389-394.

Gordon, David M.
1977 Problems in Political Economy. Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath.

Gordon, Milton M.
1964 Assimilation in American Life. New York: Oxford University Press.

Grandjean, Burke D.
1975 "An economic analysis of the Davis-Moore theory of stratification." Social Forces 53:543-552.

Harbison, Frederick and Charles A. Myers
1959 Management in the Industrial World. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Hodge, Robert W. and Patricia Hodge
1965 "Occupational assimilation as a competitive process." American Journal of Sociology 71:249-264.

Hurh, Won Moo
1977 Comparative Study of Korean Immigrants in the United States: A Typological Approach. San Francisco: R and E Research Associates, Inc.

Hurh, Won M., Hei C. Kim and Kwang C. Kim
1978 Assimilation Patterns of Immigrants in the United States: A Case Study of Korean Residents in the Chicago Area. Washington, D. C.: University Press of America.

Jade
1975 "Korean influx." Jade (December) 1:22-23.

Kim, David S. and Charles C. Wong
1977 "Business development in Koreatown, Los Angeles." Pp. 229-245 in Hyung-chan Kim (ed.), The Korean Diaspora. Santa Barbara, California: ABC-Clio Press.

Kim, Kwang Chung, Hei Chu Kim and Won Moo Hurh
1978 "Job information deprivation in the U.S.: a case study of Korean immigrants." A paper presented at the Annual Meetings of American Sociological Association, San Francisco, September 4-8. Publication forthcoming.

Kerr, Clark
1954 "The Balkanization of labor markets." Pp. 92-110 in E. W. Bakke (ed.), Labor Mobility and Economic Opportunity. New York: Wiley.

Marshall, Ray
1974 "The economics of racial discrimination: a survey." Journal of Economic Literature 12:849-871.

Mayfield, Eugene C.
1964 "The selection interview: a re-evaluation of published research." Personal Psychology 17:239-260.

Miller, Delbert C. and William H. Form
1964 Industrial Sociology, 2nd ed. New York: Harper and Row.

Ng, Wing-Cheung
1977 "An evaluation of the labor market status of Chinese Americans." Amerasia 4:101-122.

Peterson, Richard
1972 "Economics of information and job search: another view." Quarterly Journal of Economics 86:127-131.

Piore, Michael J.
1969 "On-the-job training in the dual labor market: public and private responsibilities in on-the-job training of disadvantaged workers." Pp. 101-132 in Arnold Weber et al. (eds.), Public-Private Manpower Policies. Industrial Relations Research Association.

Rees, Albert
1966 "Information networks in labor market." American Economic Review 56:559-566.

Reid, Graham L.
1972 "Job search and the effectiveness of job-finding methods." Industrial and Labor Relations Review 25:479-495.

Reynolds, Lloyd G.
1951 The Structure of Labor Market. New York: Harper and Row.

Sheppard, Harold L. and A. Harvey Belintsky
1966 The Job Hunt: Job Seeking Behavior of Unemployed Workers in a Local Economy. Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins Press.

Sofer, Cyril
1970 Men in Mid-Career. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Sowell, Thomas
1975 Race and Economics. New York: David McKay.

Stevens, David W.
1972 "Job search techniques: a new index of effectiveness." Quarterly Review of Economics and Business 12:99-103.

Tabb, William K.
1970 The Political Economy of the Black Ghetto. New York: W.W. Norton.

Taeuber, Alma F., Karl E. Taeuber and Glen G. Cain
1966 "Occupational assimilation and the competitive process: a reanalysis. American Journal of Sociology 72:273-285.

Ullman, Joseph C.
1969 "Manpower policies and job information." Pp. 35-59 in Arnold Weber et al. (eds.), Public-Private Manpower Policies. Industrial Relations Association.

Yavitz, Boris and Dean W. Morse
1973 The Labor Market: An Information System. New York: Praeger.